

29 APR 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Director-Comptroller
SUBJECT: Approval of Guidelines for Identifying Senior Officer School Candidates

1. Within the next few weeks, I shall be issuing the call for nominations for the 1972-73 sessions of the Senior Officer Schools. At that time, I would like to be able to publish guidelines to be applied by the Directorates in their identification of nominees, and for that reason present herewith the views of the Training Selection Board concerning the selection of candidates for the Senior Defense Colleges, the Advanced Management Program at Harvard, and the Senior Seminar in Foreign Policy at the Department of State.
2. Last summer the Directorates submitted a total of 58 nominations for consideration by the Board to fill 26 places in the senior schools during 1971-72, plus one nomination from the Intelligence Directorate for the Royal College of Defence Studies (formerly Imperial Defence College). Of the 32 who were not selected as principal candidates, not one was rejected for lack of high professional qualifications. Since we had so many highly qualified nominees, we were driven to rejecting some on quite arbitrary grounds. One of the most important of these was that of age. After much discussion, we felt justified in rejecting those candidates who were already a little past the age limit or would be at the very edge when they would have taken up residence at the schools more than a year later. It should be borne in mind, however, that this was not merely an arbitrary device for reducing the number of candidates. It was also a response to the clear intention of the senior schools to design their courses for younger men, usually in their late thirties. While this varies slightly from one school to another, we have had a number of indications from students who attended the Armed Forces Staff College that anybody over forty is too old to benefit most from the course.
3. For several years, it has become steadily more of a problem what to do with people who are at the upper age limits of the various schools--usually 45. If the Board continues indefinitely to select people at the upper age limit, we will merely perpetuate the situation with the result that most people will be trained after the time it would have been most beneficial to the Agency, and we shall be prevented

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from developing a system for giving training at the best age. It therefore seems important to persuade the Directorates henceforth to nominate candidates who are several years below the maximum age. This means that, in effect, a whole age-group now in their mid-forties will have to be by-passed for selection to these particular schools. However unfair this is to deserving individuals, we see no other way to put the Agency into a better posture in respect to orderly management of the selection process, and to be sure that the Agency is represented by the somewhat younger men for whom most of the courses are designed. In a couple of years, we should have developed a steady pattern for giving training when it would do the most good. This endeavor would require more forward thinking from all parts of the Agency in order to succeed.

4. Because of the long-standing high reputation the Senior Officer Schools have had in the past, it appears to be the general feeling in the Agency that this is one of the best means by which external training opportunities and rewards can be conferred. It is the feeling of the Board that with the increase in the variety of training opportunities offered over the last four or five years, it is now less uniquely advantageous for a man in his middle forties to be considered only for these schools. We have greatly increased the number of available management and executive development courses. The Agency is taking wider advantage of other types of external training, e.g., purchasing eight shares per year in the sessions of the Federal Executive Institute. Sponsorship of employees for full-time academic programs is being encouraged and, in special cases, sponsorship of a sabbatical year even though such training may not be strongly relevant to an individual's present or projected assignment. Most of all it should be recognized that one important motive for offering the Senior Intelligence Seminar is precisely this number of highly qualified officers in their forties who cannot be selected for the schools which traditionally have been regarded as valuable for them. Since the problem of highly qualified competitors for a limited number of slots in these schools will continue, we hope very much that the Agency will come to look on the Senior Intelligence Seminar as a most appropriate opportunity for the kind of people who, in the past, have been nominated for these schools. As for the senior schools' value to the Agency, we would agree with the judgment in the Macomber report for the Department of State, that only the National War College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces have a clear relevance to Agency interests. Even though the service schools may be of special importance to some specific jobs in the Agency, we think the whole system ought not be looked at merely as the primary means by which external training is possible and valuable to the individual.

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5. The Training Selection Board, having discussed the following guidelines at some length, hopes that the Deputies will agree to be guided by these principles:

- a. The Training Selection Board will abide by the schools' age limits. Nominees shall be considered only if they will be under the age limit the year of proposed entry into a school.
- b. In the course of the selection process, candidates should be ranked by their sponsoring offices and Directorates and their names submitted in preferential order to the Training Selection Board.
- c. Since it is often advisable for the Training Selection Board to consider an individual for a school other than the one for which he was nominated, the people making the nominations should specify if an individual may be considered for more than one service school and, if so, in what order of preference. Conversely, where only one school is considered to be appropriate for an individual, an explanation should be included.
- d. The more information a nominating office can give the Training Selection Board about the future prospects for a nominee, the better are his chances for selection. This information often becomes crucial in breaking a tie in ranking of candidates.
- e. The nominators should be able to assure the Training Selection Board that all appropriate parties have been informed of a nomination, especially the person being nominated, and that consequences to him and to his family, if he is selected, will have been taken into account. If a nominee is serving in another Directorate, it is also important that both Directorates are aware of the nomination. Several embarrassing incidents with respect to recent nominations demonstrated that it is important for everybody to be informed.
- f. Care should be taken not to nominate an individual for a relatively junior school if his office has any intention of nominating him in the next several years for a more senior school. Last year we rejected one man from consideration for the Army War College because he had fairly recently attended the Armed Forces Staff College.
- g. An officer who has attended one senior external training program is not likely to be selected for another senior program, within the succeeding three to five years.

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Last year one officer was rejected from consideration for the Advanced Management Program because he had attended the Industrial College of the Armed Forces two years earlier.

h. Since the highly qualified competitors for these schools are likely to be more numerous than can be accommodated, it would be helpful for all members of a Career Service Board to be familiar with the training opportunities presented in the Office of Training Catalog and to be thinking of alternatives for those who are not selected.

6. Upon your approval, the guidelines stated in paragraph 5. will be incorporated in the forthcoming call for nominations for the 1972-73 sessions of the Senior Officer Schools. In several cases, the practicality of the guidelines has been agreed upon by the Directorates.

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HUGH T. CUNNINGHAM
Chairman
Training Selection Board

APPROVED:

15/
L. K. White
Executive Director-Comptroller

14 May 1971

Date

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DTR/HTCunningham/ [] :jh (28 April 71)